National Gas Grid

910. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a proposal for establishing a National Gas Grid has been mooted by the ONGC and if so what are the details thereof; and

(b) whether any decision has been taken on this proposal ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT) : (a) and (b) The proposal of ONGC for a National Gas Grid is a part of the long-term Perspective Plan for the development and utilisation of natural gas. Its implementation will depend upon the establishment of adequate reserves of gas and availability of financial resources for its production and utilisation Exploration is underway for discovering oil and gas reserves.

Policy regarding dual pricing of LPG refills

911. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL : SHRI KAPIL VERMA :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have made any assessment of its dual pricing policy in regard to LPG refills; if so, what are the details thereof,

(b) whether Government are aware that the dual pricing policy has hit the domestic consumers as the refills meant for them are diverted for commercial purposes; and

(c) if so, what steps Government are taking to provide relief to the domestic consumers ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT) . (a) to (c) The structure for pricing of LPG cylinders, after withdrawal of subsidy to non-domestic consumer is under constant review by the oil industry and the Government Several steps were taken to check the malpractices even at the time of introducing the non-domestic price and additional steps have also been taken on a further review. These are :

(i) Identification of non-domestic customers.

(ii) Colour-banding of cylinders supplied to non-domestic customers

(iii) Inspections of dealers and users to check malpractices.

(iv) Supply of cylinders of different size for non-domestic use, wherever possible

(v) Maintenance of separate registers at the dealers level in respect of domestic and non-domestic customers

(vi) Reattachment of non-domestic customers, from dealers indulging in malpractices to other dealers.

(vii) Placement of separate indents for domestic and non-domestic cylinders by the dealers.

The policy has not affected supplies to domestic customers

Problems Faced by Public Sector Units

912. DR. R K. PODDAR :

SHRI MOSTAFA BIN QUASEM :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that manpower deployment, obsolescence of technology, etc are the main problems being faced by public sector units, and

(b) if so, what are Government's plans to sort out these problems ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM . (a) and (b) The problems faced by the Public Sector Units are manifold and vary from undertaking to undertaking depending on their specific problems However, the problems in general are, low production and productivity due to old plant and machinery, obsolete technology, excess manpower etc ; market re-

cession in some cases, higher cost, power shortage and frequent breakdowns.

The steps taken by Government to overcome these problems include modernisation and rehabilitation of plant and equipment, technology up-gradation, regular monitoring of performance, re-deployment and rationalisation of surplus manpower, training and retraining of personnel and adoption of various cost control measures.

Expansion of Rupnarayanpur unit of Hindustan Cable

913. DR R K. PODDAR :
SHRI MOSTAFA BIN QUASEM :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under Govt's consideration for the expansion of Hindustan Cable's Rupnarayanpur Unit in West Bengal,

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefore ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M ARUNACHALAM) . (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The proposal for expansion of capacity by 18 lakh Conductor Kilometers (CKM) for manufacture of Jelly Filled Cables in Rupnarayanpur Unit of Hindustan Cables Ltd. was earlier considered by the Govt. but was deferred pending finalisation of targets for telecommunication projections for 7th Plan. However, owing to demand as also resource constraints no further progress could be made so far Meanwhile, the company has been advised to revise the cost estimates of the project.

(c) Does not arise.

Rationalisation of work force in Public Sector Enterprises

914. SHRI SUKOMAL SEN :
SHRI M A. BABY :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether public sector enterprises have been asked to prepare schemes for the rationalisation of their work force;

(b) if so, what is the response from the units, and

(c) by when the schemes are likely to be made public ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) Rationalisation work force in Public Sector Undertakings is a Management function of the concerned Public Sector Undertakings. No specific instructions were issued in this regard to the Public Sector Undertakings

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Closing down of paper mills

915. SHRI SURESH KALMADI . Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of paper mills have been closed down for varying periods due to shortage of forest based raw materials, erratic movement of coal supplies, etc. during the last one year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a number of paper mills were unable to sell their entire production resulting in growing accumulation of stocks; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to improve the situation with a view to meeting the long term and immediate requirements of paper industry ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) (a) No specific reports about the closure of paper mills during the year for reasons of shortage of forest raw material or non-availability of coal have been received.